

When Pembina Was in Iowa

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WHEN PEMBINA WAS IN IOWA

In a book entitled *General View of the World*, published about 1840, was the following about Iowa Territory:

Iowa is a recently formed territory. It comprises the country lying between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers on the one hand, and the state of Missouri and British America on the other. Its greatest length is not less than 800 miles, varying in breadth from 250 to 400, with an area of at least 200,000 square miles. Like the adjoining territory of Wisconsin, but a small part has been explored by white men, and much of it is still inhabited by the Indians.

From the Des Moines to a short distance above the Wisconsin river, it has been laid off in counties, and is more or less settled. This region constitutes the southeastern section of the territory, and is a beautiful, fertile, healthful country, interspersed with timber land and prairie, and abounding in springs and millstreams.

The principal rivers of Iowa, besides the Mississippi and Missouri, which bound it on the east and west, are the St. Peter's, Upper Iowa, Turkey, Iowa, and Des Moines; these all flow into the Mississippi; the James, Sioux, and Little Sioux, are the chief tributaries of the Missouri in this region. The Red river of the north, whose head branches interlock with the St. Peter's, flows into the British Territory, and empties into Lake Winnipeg; a short portage of a mile in length, between the waters of this stream and the St. Peter's, is the only impediment to a continuous navigation from Hudson's Bay to the Gulf of Mexico.

The products of the soil are the same as those of the neighboring states: wheat, corn, rye, oats, and potatoes, all grown with great luxuriance, and are of excellent quality. The mineral region of Iowa appears to be connected with that of Wisconsin, and is equally rich in metal. The limits of the country containing the lead ore are unknown, but it probably extends for hundreds of miles towards, and into the state of Missouri; besides lead, copper, iron, and coal are known to abound.

Few portions of the United States have excited so much attention as Iowa. It is settling more rapidly than any other part of the western country with enterprising and industrious inhabitants, and will in a very few years have a sufficient population to entitle it to rank as a state. A number of towns have been laid out; they are all yet small; a few of those, however, situated on the Mississippi, are increasing very fast.

Burlington is the capital of the territory, but Dubuque is the largest town. The latter contains a land-office, three churches, a lyceum, a bank, four hotels, a printing-office, and a number of stores. The inhabitants are probably about 3000 in number. This place is in the centre of the mining district of Iowa, and the finest lead-mines in the United States are those worked in its vicinity. Peru, Davenport, Bloomington, Fort Madison, and Montrose, are the other principal towns. The site of Iowa City, on the river of the same name, intended for the capital of the territory, has been lately surveyed.

Iowa was erected into a separate territorial government by act of congress in June, 1838. The commencement of the government dated from the 4th of the succeeding July. According to a census taken in 1838, the population was upwards of 22,000; in 1840, it amounted to 42,924. The principal Indian tribes in this territory are the Sioux, Winnebagoes, Sacs, Foxes, and Assiniboins, with a few Chippequays, Ottawas, and Pottawatomes, numbering perhaps altogether from 30,000 to 35,000 individuals.

Fort Snelling, a few miles below the falls of St. Anthony, and situated on the point of land between the Mississippi and St. Peter's rivers, is the most remote military post in this quarter, occupied by the troops of the United States. The village of Pembina, the southernmost settlement of Lord Selkirk's colony, falls within the limits of Iowa; it is situated on the banks of the Red river of Lake Winnipeg. The inhabitants are mostly Scotch highlanders and Swiss.

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